



NEWS RELEASE

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Dept. of Consumer Affairs Urges Californians to Heed Federal Government's Recall of Possibly Lead-Tainted Toy Jewelry Sold in Vending Machines

SACRAMENTO — Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Director Charlene Zettel today urged consumers to check their homes for toy jewelry that may pose a danger of lead poisoning, especially to young children.

The jewelry, sold in 700,000 vending machines across the nation, has been recalled by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and four firms that import the products.

"Lead poisoning can cause serious problems, especially for young children who might put the jewelry in their mouths or swallow it," Director Zettel said. "It has been linked to serious neurological damage and behavior problems."

The recall, issued today, affects an estimated 150 million toy bracelets, rings and necklaces that have been sold over the past 18 months in vending machines at shopping malls, and discount, department and grocery stores. Tests by the CPSC reportedly show some of the jewelry has concentrations of lead as high as 69 percent by weight. By comparison, federal law prohibits the sale of paint that contains more than 0.06 percent lead.

"Our goal is to have these toys removed from vending machines in California and elsewhere in the as quickly as possible," said CPSC Chairman Hall Stratton.

"The CPSC says that only about half of the recalled items actually contain lead, but all are being recalled because it is too hard to distinguish the safe jewelry from the unsafe jewelry," Director Zettel said. "Kids are most likely to buy these items, so parents need to check their homes to make sure they don't have any possibly dangerous products lying around."

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According to the CPSC, the rings are gold- or silver-colored, with different designs, paint finishes and center stones. The necklaces have black cord or rope, or gold- or silver-colored chains, with pendants of various designs. Some of them include gemstones. The bracelets include charm bracelets, bracelets with faux stones and medallion links. The jewelry costs consumers 25 cents to 75 cents.

For more information, consumers can contact the Toy Jewelry Hotline at (800) 441-4234 between 6 a.m. and 2 p.m. PDT, Monday through Friday, or visit www.toyjewelryrecall.com, a Web site set up by the firms that imported the jewelry. You can view the CPSC press release, which includes pictures of some of the jewelry by clicking [here](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml04/04174.html).
(<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml04/04174.html>)

The recall is the third such CPSC action in the past 10 months. The two earlier recalls affected 2.4 million pieces of toy jewelry.

One of those earlier recalls was prompted by a report that a 4-year-old Oregon boy came down with lead poisoning after swallowing a pendant he bought in a gumball machine.

The Department of Consumer Affairs' mission is to promote and protect the interests of California consumers. It licenses and regulates 2.3 million professionals, including doctors, dentists, contractors and auto-repair technicians. For more information, visit the Department's Web site at www.dca.ca.gov.

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